

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: PROCESS FOR FILING A NON-MEDICAL EXEMPTION UNDER THE IMMUNIZATION OF SCHOOL PUPILS ACT (ISPA)

Q.1. Why am I required to attend an immunization education session before filing my child's statement of conscience or religious belief (a non-medical exemption)? What is the process for filing a non-medical exemption for students attending school in Ontario?

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (the Ministry) amended the Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA) in the fall of 2017 to outline a requirement for parents to complete an immunization education session before filing a statement of conscience or religious belief with your local public health unit.

The education session provides information about how immunizations best protect you and your child from vaccine-preventable diseases and includes information on vaccine safety, immunization requirements for school attendance, the role of immunization in community health and information about Ontario's recommended immunization schedule. This information is intended to help you make an informed decision about immunizations for your child.

After the immunization education session, you can submit a completed Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief form that is signed and sworn or affirmed before a commissioner for taking affidavits in Ontario. (see Q.3.) For more information, including the form, go to immunization requirements.

Q.2. What happens after I attend an immunization education session?

You will receive a Vaccine Education Certificate at the end of the session and:

A. You may decide that your child will receive the required immunizations. These can be obtained at:

- Your health care provider's office or walk-in clinic
- Book an appointment online at a York Region Public Health immunization clinic or call Access York at 1-877-464-9675

B. You may decide to obtain a non-medical exemption for your child.

Please keep the Vaccine Education Certificate in your files. You will now be required to submit a Statement of Conscience or Belief Form, signed by a commissioner for taking affidavits.

Q.3. Who is a commissioner for taking affidavits?

A commissioner for taking affidavits is a person who can legally administer an oath, affirmation or declaration. They are often referred to as a Notary. The commissioner for taking affidavits is required to sign your Statement of Conscience or Belief Form for it to be considered valid. This form can often be signed at a municipal office, city hall, by your lawyer or through a notary service.

COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SERVICES

1-877-464-9675
TTY 1-866-512-6228
york.ca/immunizations



A fee may be charged for this service. York Region Public Health staff cannot sign the Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief form.

More information about [finding a notary public or commissioner of oaths for taking affidavits.](#)